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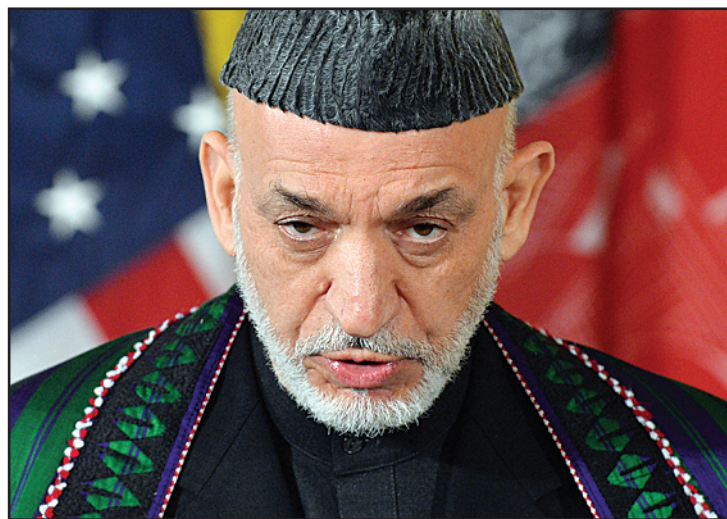
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Afghan President Karzai promises will step down in 2014



WASHINGTON (AFP) Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai said yesterday that he would stand down at the end of his second term in 2014 and allow a successor to be freely elected.

"The greatest of my achievements eventually, seen by the Afghan people, will be a proper, well-organized, interference-free election in which the Afghan people can elect their next president," he said.

"And certainly I will be a retired president, and very

happily a retired president," he vowed, in response to a question about the 2014 vote at a joint White House press conference with Obama.

Obama and Karzai met for two hours before sitting down together for lunch and holding their joint press conference.

Karzai was elected in 2004 and re-elected in 2009, in two votes marred by allegations of widespread electoral fraud and held against the backdrop of an ongoing war between NATO-backed government forces and Taliban guerrillas.

Parliament gives the green light expansion and renovation of Dr. Horacio E. Oduber Hospital



Minister of Public Health and Sport Dr. Richard Visser

Two days of turbulent parliamentary sessions took place in the early part of this week, resulting in the final approval of a financing plan to allow extensive expansion and renovation of the Dr. Horacio E. Oduber Hospital, Aruba prime medical care facility.

Minister of Finance, Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy, Mike de Meza, joined Minister of Public Health and Sport, Dr. Richard Visser in announcing the laws have been passed and a financing agreement approved to allow the plan on Thursday morning, January 10. The vote in among the 21-seat parliament was 14 for the measure, 4 against and 3 abstentions.

Minister de Meza explained that the 300,000 million

Aruban florins (\$1,714,285) needed to complete the project is being underwritten by Stichting Onroerend Goed (SOGA-Foundation Real Estate) which has performed such a service in the past. This is in keeping with the current administration's policy of pursuing public/private partnerships for the improvement and advancement of Aruba's infrastructure. The government will be "renting" the facility from SOGA over the next 29 years. Work on the hospital will commence as soon as possible.

Minister Dr. Visser explained the facility will have expanded capacity and services. The 320 beds will be nearly doubled. There will be a number of new outbuildings and patient floors will be reorganized to centralize the



Minister of Finance, Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy, Mike de Meza

nurses' stations. Thus, emergency services and equipment will be much more easily accessed. Waiting rooms will be enlarged.

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Chamber of Commerce to host Business Plaza 2013



KvK Director Leo Maduro, Shariska Odor and Sponsor Michael Leo van Romondt of Deloitte

Director of Aruba Chamber of Commerce (Kamer van Koophandel or KvK) Leo Maduro invites all interested in advancing the quality of their business to attend the free "Business Plaza 2013: Step Forward!" which will be conducted on Saturday, January 19 at their KvK building on Irausquin Boulevard. The event is being sponsored by Deloitte Financial Services and other accounting companies. The day will end with an introduction to "Europe Meets Americas" which will take place from May 5 to 8 on Aruba, with the possibilities it will present for local entrepreneurs.

The official opening will take place at 10:00 AM in the

auditorium. There will be several speakers throughout the day covering a diversity of topics to assist businesses of all size to expand their markets and increase profitability.

Morning sessions will include "Strategic Marketing and Social Media" by Frits Israel of ID Aruba and "Sustainable & Effective HRM for Entrepreneurs in a Shifting Economy," with Ryan Maduro of Independent Organization Development Consultants. Notary Hilde Rodriguez-Taekema will open the session with an explanation of expansion and change of legal forms for

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Aruba's Prime Minister Mike Eman will visit the event in the afternoon and open the session on "Europe Meets the Americas." Preceding his visit will be a talk on "Financial Decision for Smart Investment" by Ryan Kock of Atlas Accountancy. Afternoon sessions will also include "Going Green Benefits for your Company," with Freddy Vargas of Elmar NV and "Care for Employees," by Enrita Werelmen of E-con Social Consultancy Services.

Continued on page 5

Biden: no 'silver bullet' to fix gun violence

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US Vice President Joe Biden said yesterday there was "no silver bullet" available to beat the complex scourge of gun violence as his policy task force sat down with video game producers.

With another firearms metaphor, Biden said he was "shooting for Tuesday" to send his recommendations to President Barack Obama, who promised to use his power to try to prevent new outrages after a school massacre in Connecticut.

"We know that there is no silver bullet," Biden said, insisting that the question of how to stop more deaths following a spate of mass shootings was a difficult one.

"I come to this meeting with no judgment."

Biden sat down with executives of video game and software firms amid speculation over the role violent content of so-called "first person shooter" games has on disturbed users who later turn to real-life violence.

The vice president questioned whether there had been a "coarsening of our culture" over the years, but admitted he did not know the answer to the question.

Biden has been meeting all the "stakeholders" with interests in the guns issue, including victims of violence, law enforcement organizations, hunting groups and members of the gun lobby.

On Thursday, the National Rifle Association said that Biden cared more about stamping out gun rights than protecting school children after its representative attended a meeting with Biden.

Gold bars found in Puerto Rico point to Curacao heist

SAN JUAN -- Eleven gold bars were found by US border patrol authorities last month at an airport in Puerto Rico and the precious metal is believed to have been part of the November 30 heist aboard a Guyanese boat in the Dutch island of Curacao.

There had been earlier reports that gold from the mind-boggling US\$11.5M heist had made its way to the US but there had been no confirmed reports until a statement on Tuesday by the US Customs and Border Protection. Puerto Rico is an unincorporated US territory.

The agency said that the gold bars were found last month at the Rafael Hernández International Airport in the western city of Aguadilla. They had been shipped in boxes from Curacao.

Authorities said that the 11

bars weigh a total of approximately 34.7 kilogrammes (76.3 pounds) and have a total value of around US\$1.7 million at the current gold price.

The gold bars were turned over to the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which is investigating the matter.

Around 70 bars of gold were believed to have been seized from the boat with a Guyanese crew and six persons have been detained in Curacao over the matter. The gold is believed to have been smuggled from Guyana but local authorities have not said whether there are pursuing any leads here. They are awaiting documentation from Curacao before releasing the details of a visit to the island by two officials of the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission in the wake of the heist.



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Parliament gives green light . . .

Continued from page 1

The number of single and double rooms will be greater. Labs will be enlarged and modernized. Specialists will be closer at hand, and the Emergency Room will also receive a major makeover to improve and speed treatment.

There will be two elevator banks; one exclusively for staff and transporting patients to special services, the other for visitors and out patients. This will smooth the flow of traffic through the hospital. Along with new, modern equipment, the facility will receive a decorative makeover, so patients will find their hospital stay, which is usually a difficult time, far more cheerful, which encourages recovery. After close inspection, it was found the main building is of sturdy construction and expansion is considered the best plan for Aruba's hospital.

Rosalie Klein

Opportunity to pay motor vehicles tax on Saturdays begins today



ORANJESTAD – The Tax Department announces to all motorists that as of today, January 12, 2013, they can pay their motor vehicle taxes on Saturdays. The main tax office at Camacuri will be open for this purpose every Saturday until February 16, 2013, aside from regular office hours during the week.

Opening hours are from

8:00 a.m. until 2 p.m. non-stop. Motorists can claim their number plate right after making their payments, until 2:00 p.m.

Clients wishing to pay other kind of taxes can also do so during these Saturdays.

Please take notice that this extra service is only at the main tax offices at Camacuri and not at any of the auxiliary government offices on the island.

The Tax Department anticipates providing assistance to as many clients as possible during the coming days.

New laws will augment social security payments, special requirements for additional benefits



SVB Director Gino Croes and Pension Fund Director Luis Tromp

Gino Croes, Director of the SVB, which handles a number of social services awarding payments to citizens, and Luis Tromp, Head of the Department of Social Security (AOV), welcomed island media to their office on the Vondellaan to explain the new increase in social security payments retroactively effective January of this year.

It was announced on Tuesday, January 8 that new laws have been passed which will increase the social security benefit paid monthly by 50 Aruban florins (\$28), across the board. However, a new regulation was passed that will allow an additional 50

Aruban florins monthly to be paid to individuals who depend on their Aruban social security, with no other form of income.

Mr. Croes explained that over the next month, all those inscribed with the SVB and receiving Social Security benefits will receive notification via post and a form to fill in to apply for the additional 50 Aruban florins. Individuals who also receive social security from Holland, or are included in complementary pension plans from the government, insurance companies, the tourism pension plan, or have any sort of supplemental income outside of



Form to be filled for an additional 50 florin monthly

their Aruban social security, are not eligible for the additional monthly stipend.

Those who are eligible must fill in the form, which is presented in both Dutch and Papiamentu, and file it by March 31, to obtain the additional benefits. Each applicant will be investigated, and misinforming the SVB regarding additional income will be penalized with a 1,500 Aruban florins fine. Applications can be filed at the SVB office on the Vondellaan in Oranjestad, or in their branch office in San Nicolas.

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“Mary Joan Foundation Support Group” searching for people with interest in voluntarism



Mary Joan “Foundation” would like to say thank you to the Aruban community, for their support over the past five years. During 2012, the foundation has been very active and successful. The organization held special support group meetings for their clients, spread the word on awareness, provided social and psychological support, lectures and organized several fundraising activities during the year.

The foundation would have never accomplished all their goals if it was not for the active support of volunteers, who offered their time and experience to the cause. After another successful year Mary Joan Foun-

dation would like to continue spreading awareness on breast cancer and is in search of volunteers.

A volunteer meeting has been programmed on January 15th, and the location will be the meeting room at Fantastic Gardens. Anyone who wishes to join the foundation as a volunteer is welcome from 20:00 to 21:00, where information will be given on the type of volunteers that are needed and where you could sign up.

For more information please call the Mary Joan Foundation office (Sabana Blanco #8) at 588-9999. Office hours are from 7:30 – 12:30 and from 13:30 – 16:30.

Susan Friedman and Arthur Pearsall honored at the Divi Phoenix Resort



Recently, Mr. Arthur Pearsall and Mrs. Susan Friedman from Pleasantville, NY, were honored as Distinguished Visitors, after returning to Aruba for their 17th consecutive visit. The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a

token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for more than 10 consecutive years.

Mr. Ricardo Croes, representing Aruba Tourism Authority, presented them with a certificate at the Divi Phoenix Resort

Mr. Arthur commented

that they have been coming to Aruba for 17 straight years, and they are looking forward to be honored as an Ambassador of Goodwill in 2016.

Picture shows Mr. Croes together with Susan and Arthur and GM Mr. Griffith and Aivil from the Divi Phoenix Resort.



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Chamber of Commerce to host Business Plaza 2013

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Simultaneously taking place with the morning lectures are a series of workshops on bookkeeping and taxes as well as business planning, where attendees can get more personalized advice. Aruba's Free Zone, The Department of Economic Affairs & Industry, Customs Department and the Tax Office, SIAD, will have a market place in the Multimedia Library throughout the day to answer questions and discuss particular issues.

The entire day of business advice, information and networking will be from 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM, and attendance is free. Snacks and refreshments will be included. Pre-registration, as places are limited, is essential. Interested parties can register and obtain more information online by visiting the KvK website: www.arubachamber.com or e-mail businessinfo@arubachamber.com. To contact the KvK directly, call 582-1866 extension 30 or 27.

Rosalie Klein

New laws will augment social security payments,...

Continued from page 3

The additional 50 florins payment will begin in the month of May and be retroactive for the four months prior, so payments of the 200 florins due from January 1 will take place in the May payment. Social Security payments are not made at the end of the month, but on the 3rd of the month they are due. Social Security recipients are advised to inquire at one of the SVB offices if they have not received their notification and forms by around the 15th of February.

For more information, inquire at the SVB offices during working hours, telephone number 527-2700 or visit their website: <http://www.svb.aruba.org/pensioen/seguro-di-biehes/>

Rosalie klein

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Court drama over US cinema massacre trial

CENTENNIAL (AFP) - The father of a victim of the Colorado cinema massacre yelled "rot in hell!" at the alleged gunman yesterday, when a judge delayed officially charging him a day after ruling he stand trial.

Four or five people walked out of court after judge William Sylvester postponed for two months a hearing to arraign James Holmes, the 25-year-old who is accused of shooting 12 moviegoers dead and injuring at least 58 others.

Following preliminary hearings this week it was ordered

Thursday that Holmes will face trial over the late night massacre in Aurora, outside Denver, last July.

But the suspect's defense lawyers objected to the arraignment -- the official laying of charges, when Holmes will enter a plea -- yesterday, when it was meant to take place, and the judge postponed the hearing until March 12.

After the announcement several people left the court and shortly after Steve Hernandez, father of victim Rebecca Wingo, shouted "Rot in hell, Holmes!" prompting his im-

mediate removal from the room by guards.

Holmes is accused over the July 20 shooting at a midnight screening of the Batman movie, "The Dark Knight Rises." The massacre briefly revived America's perennial debate about gun control.

Witnesses said Holmes threw smoke bomb-type devices before opening fire randomly with weapons including an AR-15 military-style rifle, a 12-gauge shotgun and a .40-caliber pistol.

Over three days earlier this week, prosecutors called wit-

nesses who gave chilling accounts of the slaughter, and played 911 emergency calls in which the chaos and loud booms of gunshots could be clearly heard.

Holmes's lawyers had been expected to present witnesses to bolster a case that he may be mentally unfit to stand trial.

But in the end they announced they would not, and the judge ruled Thursday, in an order posted online, that prosecutors had established there was "probable cause" to believe the defendant committed the crimes.

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Obama: US moves to support role in Afghanistan 'this spring'

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US President Barack Obama and his Afghan counterpart Hamid Karzai said yesterday that American forces would hand the lead in the fight against the Taliban to Afghan forces in the next few months.

"Starting this spring, our troops will have a different mission -- training, advising, assisting Afghan forces. It will be a historic moment and another step toward full Afghan sovereignty," Obama told a joint news conference.

Obama said US forces would "still be in harm's way" in Afghanistan after the hand-over, at least until 2014, but would take a backseat to Afghan forces in offensive operations and the drawdown

would come a little quicker than planned.

"Because of the progress that has been made in terms of Afghan security forces, their capacity to take the lead, we are able to meet those goals and accelerate them somewhat," Obama said.

Karzai agreed, saying: "I'm very happy to hear from the president as we also discussed earlier that in spring this year, the Afghan forces will be fully responsible for providing security and protection to the Afghan people."

"And that the international forces, the American forces, will be no longer present in the villages, that it will be the task of the Afghan forces to provide for the Afghan people in secu-

urity and protection."

The presence of US troops in a training and support role after 2014 would depend on the United States negotiating a security agreement with Afghanistan that would give them protection from Afghan law.

"And if we have a follow-on force of any sort, past 2014, it has got to be at the invitation of the Afghan government and they have to feel comfortable with it," Obama told the White House news conference.

"I will say and I've said to President Karzai that we have arrangements like this with countries all around the world. And nowhere do we have any kind of security agreement with a country without immunity for our troops."

Venezuelan VP visits ailing Chavez in Cuba again

CARACAS (AFP) - Vice President Nicolas Maduro yesterday visited ailing Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez in Cuba, a day after the leftist leader's inauguration in Caracas was replaced by a huge rally.

Maduro, 50, has delivered somber updates about the absent leader's delicate condition which has plunged Venezuela into uncertainty in the past month, with the opposition calling for a medical board to assess Chavez's condition.

That demand was rejected by the Supreme Court, and in his latest update Maduro -- who previously visited Chavez -- said that on the the upcoming trip he would relay details of support received from regional leaders.

In power for 14 years and re-elected in October, Chavez was supposed to be sworn in to a new six year term on Thursday, but the government indefinitely postponed the event after the president suffered a severe lung infection.

The opposition meanwhile called for counter-demonstrations on January 23, the day in 1958 that began Venezuela's modern democratic era with the ouster of its last military dictatorship.

Leopoldo Lopez, an opposition leader, said Chavez's failure to turn up to his own ceremony had created "an undefined situation in which we can be without a president, and without clear signs that the president is governing."

The Supreme Court has ruled the cancer-stricken Chavez can postpone his swearing-in indefinitely, and the government has not given an indication of when the leader might return.

It was the last legal hurdle to a government plan for resolving the vacuum created by Chavez's illness that met fierce resistance from the opposition, which had argued it was unconstitutional.

In a significant endorsement, the head of the Organization of American States said in Washington yesterday that the hemispheric body "fully respects" the decision to indefinitely postpone Chavez's swearing in.

"The issue has been resolved by the three branches of government of Venezuela: it was presented by the executive, considered by the legislature and decided by the judiciary," OAS secretary general Jose Miguel Insulza said.

West African bloc authorises troop deployment in Mali

LAGOS (AFP) - The chairman of west African bloc ECOWAS yesterday authorised the immediate deployment of troops to Mali, a statement said amid an offensive against Islamists who control the country's desert north.

The statement came after Mali's army said troops from Nigeria, Senegal and France were deployed in support of government forces in their offensive against Islamists in the country's centre.

Mali yesterday declared a state of emergency and unleashed the offensive against the Islamists amid growing fears of the country becoming an Afghanistan-style haven for extremists within easy reach of western Europe.

The UN Security Council has given its blessing for a 3,000-strong African force to be sent to Mali but it was not expected to be ready to deploy before September at the earliest.

In its statement, the 15-na-

tion Economic Community of West African States expressed its "deep concern following the deterioration of the situation in Mali".

It added that it was especially concerned "over the current attempt by terrorist occupation forces to take the city of Kona and advance toward the south on positions held by the Malian armed forces."

The statement did not give further details on troop deployments. An army spokesman in Nigeria, which has the largest military in the bloc, said he had no information on the situation.

Nigeria, where ECOWAS headquarters is located, had earlier pledged 600 troops for the force.

France has led calls for an international response but had until yesterday insisted that its involvement would be limited to providing logistical support for the force being prepared by ECOWAS.

The situation has evolved rapidly in recent days.

The Islamists captured Kona earlier this week and moved about 1,200 fighters to within 20 kilometres (12 miles) of Mopti, a strategically important town on the frontier between rebel-held and government-held territories.

There have been concerns in west Africa over the risks posed by the Islamists and criminal gangs operating in northern Mali. Those concerns include speculation over whether northern Mali groups and Islamist extremist group Boko Haram in Nigeria have begun to cooperate more closely.

US General Carter Ham, head of US Africa Command, has said he was concerned about indications of growing links between African extremist groups that could pose a threat across the continent as well as to Europe and the United States.



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International News

Years after quake, Haitian homeless feel abandoned



PORT-AU-PRINCE (AFP) - Three years after Haiti was devastated by a massive earthquake, hundreds of thousands of homeless people are still at risk from crime, disease and the elements in crowded makeshift camps.

The 2010 disaster triggered a global outpouring of sympathetic rhetoric and pledges of aid for the already impoverished Caribbean nation, but residents and aid agencies

complain that rebuilding and re-development has been too slow.

Around 358,000 people are still living rough in scores of camps scattered around the capital Port-au-Prince and surrounding districts, exposed to a crime wave, a cholera outbreak and -- from time to time -- hurricanes.

"We are without support," complained Wisly Decimus, a former teacher who has given

up trying to run classes in a tent in the Marassa camp, just outside the capital, where 5,000 people cling to life beside a dangerous river.

"We have been abandoned by the authorities. January 12 will be the anniversary of three years of suffering, misery and contempt," he spat.

Global aid agency Oxfam, one of several foreign development bodies engaged in the reconstruction effort, say progress has been made, but it is often seen as piecemeal and uncoordinated, lacking in central government direction.

And the dangers have been underlined by a series of follow-up tragedies, such as the cholera outbreak apparently triggered by sewage from a UN military base and that claimed 8,000 lives and sickened more than 635,000 people.

Russia to allow 'some orphans' to be adopted in US

MOSCOW (AFP) - Russian children whose adoptions have already been approved by courts will go to the United States despite a blanket ban on all American adoptions, a Kremlin spokesman said on Friday.

"Those who have received a court decision will go," Presi-

dent Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov told AFP.

He declined further details, but Russian officials say 52 children were in the process of being adopted by US parents when the controversial ban on US adoptions came into force January 1.

Russia adopted the law in reprisal for new US legislation that targets Russian officials who have allegedly committed rights abuses.

Kremlin children's rights envoy Pavel Astakhov said, citing a preliminary figure, that 52 children were at various stages of being adopted by Americans and that he had requested firm data from the education ministry.

"Currently no-one can tell for sure -- these are children from Kamchatka to Kaliningrad," he told AFP, referring to Russia's western and eastern borders.

"This is all very individual. Every child is in a different situation, at a different stage.

Saudi king names women to Shura Council for first time

RIYADH (AFP) - Saudi King Abdullah has appointed women for the first time to a top advisory body, with decrees published on Friday marking a breakthrough in a kingdom that imposes stringent restrictions on females.

The historic decisions mean that 30 women will now be allowed to sit on the previously all-male 150-seat Shura Council, although females in Saudi Arabia are banned from driving and denied the right to travel without male consent.

The decrees were welcomed by female Saudi novelist Badriya al-Bishr as a "promise kept" by the king, who has been treading carefully over the years to empower women in his push for reforms.

The 30 chosen women include university graduates, human rights activists and two princesses.

Also among them is Thuraia Obaid, a veteran UN administrator who served notably as executive director of the UN Development Programme and undersecretary general of the world body.

But the decrees stipulated strict guidelines for allowing women into the once all-male enclave, saying men and women will be segregated inside the council.

Women will be seated in a special area and enter the council through a separate door so as not to mix with their male colleagues.

Abdullah had been carefully treading towards change, introducing municipal elections for the first time in 2005.

In 2011 he granted women the right to vote and run as candidates in the next local election, set for 2015, and

said he would also name them to the Shura Council because "we refuse marginalising women's role in the Saudi society in all fields."

Saudi Arabia has seen many changes since Abdullah became king in 2005.

Norah al-Fayez became the first woman ever named to a ministerial post in 2009 when she was given named deputy education minister for women's education.

More recently, Saudi women broke ground when two of them took part in the London Olympics.

But in the oil-rich kingdom, women rights are stifled daily and lag far behind international standards.

Since November, each time a Saudi woman travels outside the kingdom she is being monitored by an electronic system that sends text messages to the phones of her male guardian, even if they are traveling together.

The electronic tracking was swiftly condemned on social network Twitter and by women rights activists, while Bishr criticised "the state of slavery under which women are held" in the ultra-conservative kingdom.

In an interview with AFP this week, Prince Talal bin Abdul Aziz, a half brother of King Abdullah, said the Shura Council must be empowered to legislate and criticised clerics who reject calls for women to be allowed to drive.

"How can it make sense to allow a driver (a male stranger) to stay in the house day and night while prohibiting mixing between sexes and women from driving?"

"Do we not have confidence in our women?"



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or
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Health & Living

Fundacion Sinta Ros visited by Mary Joan Foundation



-- Clients of Mary Joan Foundation visited Fundacion Sinta Ros in Curacao for an exchange of information. A group of clients of Aruba's Mary Joan Founda-

tion travelled to Curacao last November for a five day visit. The group received a special invitation from The Fundacion Sinta Ros of Curacao, which is also offering support to those with breast cancer.

Preparations for the trip and the fundraising was led by Rosa van der Biezen and a few other women who also participated in the trip. Thanks to several business owners and friends who donated towards coffee mornings.

President of the Fundacion Sinta Ros, Mrs. Angeline de Ron-Tromp opened her home to receive the Aruba delegation of the Mary Joan Foundation. The group participated in Curacao's annual walkaton and were proud to lead the procession carrying the Mary Joan Foundation banner ahead of the thousands of participants. Joana Dirksz won a prize for her outfit creativity during the walkaton.

The Aruba delegation shared in an interchange of ideas during an evening gathering, and were invited by the Curacao group to participate in future activities of the Sinta Ros in Curacao.

Nutrition is very important to the MJF clients. And, at the Umbuto Wellness Center they enjoyed a delicious vegetarian dish, thanks to Cheraldine Osepa. The group visited several touristic areas such as Barber, Dolfine Habitat, Punda and Otrobanda and several other places.

Special thanks to Angeline de Ron, President of the Fundacion Sinta Ros and her spouse, as well as all the ladies of the foundation for their warm welcome and the enjoyable stay in Curacao.

Sao Paulo to force treatment on crack addicts

SAO PAULO (AFP) - Brazil's richest city Sao Paulo will start rounding up the most down-and-out crack addicts from its streets and make them get treatment whether they like it or not, an official says.

Rio de Janeiro is already doing this with minors, but the new program in Sao Paulo, South America's largest city, will target adults, said the justice secretary of Sao Paulo state, Eloisa de Sousa, in an interview with AFP.

For now 700 spots in the mandatory rehab program have been created. It will get started later this month.

Economic powerhouse Brazil is now considered the world's top consumer of crack, a cheap and highly addictive

residue of cocaine-making, with a million users, says a recent study by the Federal University of Sao Paulo.

A downtown Sao Paulo crack slum was cleaned out in a wave of police raids a year ago. But dealers and users are now moving in back in by the hundreds.

De Sousa acknowledged the delicate nature of forcing treatment on people. She insisted however the program is for addicts so far gone they can no longer look after themselves.

Brazil's congress plans to vote in February on a bill that toughens penalties for drug trafficking and calls for forced treatment for crack addicts all over the country.

Massive US flu outbreak claims at least 18 lives

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The United States was in the grip Thursday of a deadly influenza outbreak that has hit harder and earlier than in previous years, and has claimed the lives of at least 18 children.

"The type of flu is one that generally is more serious. It's the H3N2 variety, which is historically more serious than we see with other types of virus, Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases," told AFP.

The epidemic, which broke out in early December, has caused some 2,200 hospitalizations across the United States, federal health officials said.

Particularly hard hit has been the northeastern city of Boston, where officials have declared a public health emergency.

City officials said there have so far been about 700 con-

firmed cases of the flu, almost 10 times the number from this time last year.

Flu strikes every year, bringing chills, fever, coughing and achy misery to millions.

Health officials said the flu vaccine is a good match for the strain of influenza circulating around, and confers about 60 percent to 65 percent protection against the illness.

In addition to being inoculated against flu, health officials recommend such basic prophylactic procedures as frequent hand washing, and coughing or sneezing into one's sleeve to keep the illness at bay.

Some U.S. health facilities even are making flu shots a condition of employment, although one critical-care nurse made headlines recently for refusing the injection -- insisting she would rather be fired than take the vaccine.

Yellow Night
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ARUBA

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Sci-Tech

Thief posts own picture on victim's Facebook page



JOHANNESBURG (AFP) - A suspected thief appears to have mistakenly posted his own picture on his victim's Facebook page using a stolen tablet computer, South African media reported Friday.

James and Barbara McCall

returned from a weekend break to find thieves had broken into their home and had made off with digital cameras, tablets and television sets.

On discovering the theft the following morning, James set to change his login passwords for Facebook and other sites.

It was then that McCall noticed that a man's picture had been uploaded on his wife's Facebook page.

He suspects it must be that of one of the thieves.

"He probably did not realise he was doing it," McCall told the Star daily.

"Usually you never log off from a tablet, so it could have happened quite quickly."



BEIJING (AFP) - A landslide killed at least 42 people including seven from a single family when it smashed into a remote village in southwestern China on Friday, state media said. Photos posted on Yunnan Web, run by the Yunnan provincial government showed rescuers in orange uniforms digging in wide swathes of clumpy mud against a backdrop of snow-covered, terraced hills. More than 1,000 rescuers were sent to the site of the landslide, which was estimated to be 300 metres long, 80 metres wide and 30 metres deep, according to authorities. Snow was visible in images of the rescue, in an area that has experienced unusually low temperatures in recent weeks, with China suffering what authorities have called its coldest winter in 28 years.

Astronomers spot biggest structure in Universe

PARIS (AFP) - Astronomers on Friday said they had observed the largest structure yet seen in the cosmos, a cluster of galaxies from the early Universe that spans an astonishing four billion light years.

The sprawling structure is known as a large quasar group (LQG), in which quasars -- the nuclei of ancient galaxies, powered by supermassive black holes -- clump together.

The discovery in the deep Universe was made by a team led by Roger Clowes at the Jeremiah Horrocks Institute at Britain's University of Central Lancashire.

It would take a spaceship travelling at the speed of light four thousand million years to get from one end of the cluster to the other.

To give a sense of scale, our galaxy (the Milky Way) is separated from its nearest neighbour, the Andromeda galaxy, by two and a half million light years.

"While it is difficult to fathom the scale of this LQG, we can say quite definitely it is the largest structure ever seen in the entire Universe," Clowes said in a press statement issued by Britain's Royal Astronomical Society (RAS).

"This is hugely exciting, not least because it runs counter to our current understanding of the scale of the Universe."

The paper appears in a RAS journal, Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society.

Personal computer sales slip during holiday season

SAN FRANCISCO (AFP) - Personal computer sales slipped at the end of last year, despite the holiday shopping season and the release of new Windows operating software for machines.

Worldwide PC shipments totaled 89.8 million units in the fourth quarter of 2012, finishing 6.4 percent lower than the same period the prior year, according to International Data Corporation.

It was said to be the first time in more than five years that there was a year-on-year decline in PC shipments during the holiday season.

Microsoft released the new Windows 8 operating system worldwide on October 26 as a way to help the dominant PC software maker get a bigger share of the market for mobile

devices such as tablets.

Windows 8 was designed with touch-screen capabilities in mind and to make it easier to synchronize computer content across the array of Internet-linked gadgets used in modern life.

"Consumers expected all sorts of cool PCs with tablet and touch capabilities," said IDC research director David Daoud.

"Instead, they mostly saw traditional PCs that feature a new OS (Windows 8) optimized for touch and tablet with applications and hardware that are not yet able to fully utilize these capabilities."

PC shipments in the US market dropped 4.5 percent in the quarter and ended with a seven percent decline for the year, according to IDC.

Apple sees China becoming biggest market: report

SHANGHAI (AFP) - Apple Chief Executive Tim Cook, on his second visit to China in a year, said he expects the country to surpass the United States as the technology giant's largest market, state media reported.

Cook said Apple would launch new products in China, but declined to comment on reports the company is planning a cheaper iPhone for emerging markets like China, the official Xinhua News agency reported. Apple said it sold over two million iPhone 5 handsets in China within three days of its launch on December 14 last year.

Products of the California-based company, including the iPhone and iPad, are wildly popular in China where they are coveted by wealthy consumers.

Coming out with a more affordable iPhone in China and other markets could help Apple ward off competition from bargain-priced smartphones powered by Google-backed Android software.

A separate report carried by the news portal of Internet giant Sina quoted Cook as saying Apple planned to have more than 25 retail stores in China.

Apple did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Cook's visit.

On Cook's previous visit to China last March, the man tipped to be China's next premier, Li Keqiang, told him that foreign firms should protect workers as Apple faced criticism over factory conditions in China.

COMICS

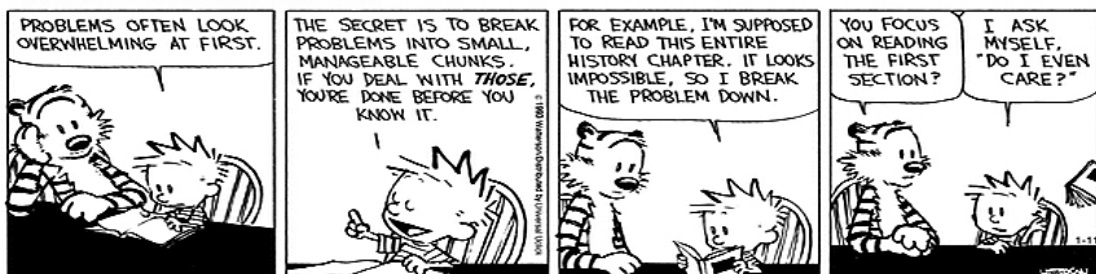
PICKLES



MOMMA



CALVIN and HOBBS



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ACROSS

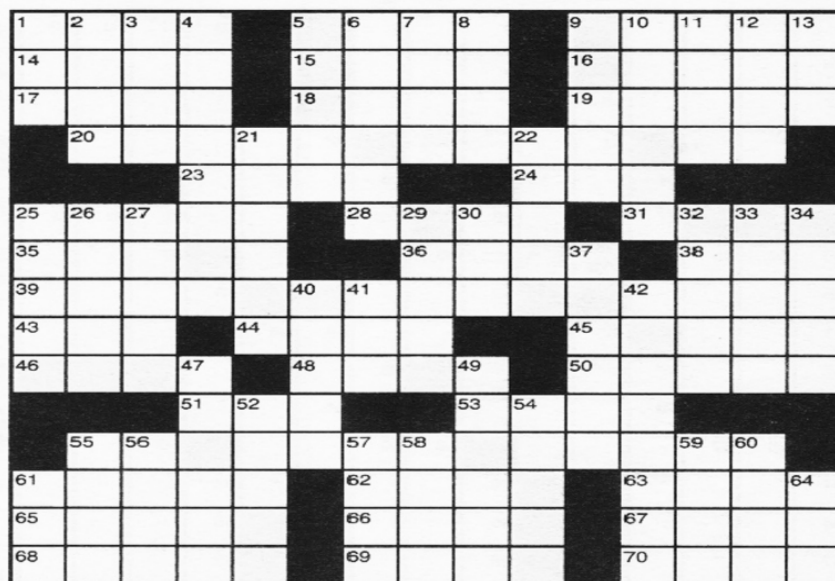
1. Bandleader Webb
5. Land unit
9. Intelligent
14. Aviation prefix
15. Come up short
16. Where Galileo taught math
17. Oat ____
18. "Free Willy" whale
19. Cease sitting
20. Fairy-tale intro
23. Wheel part
24. Hill VIP
25. Houston player
28. Actor Perkins
31. Prep school, often: abbr.
35. Attack used as a distraction
36. Rivers, to Juanita
38. Abbr. on a vitamin label
39. Infrequently
43. Seoul soldier
44. Be a match for
45. Pearly shell surface
46. Formerly, once
48. Roulette choices
50. River embankments
51. Shot spot
53. Pitcher Hershisier
55. Decisively
61. Twins description,

DOWN

1. Fleet member
2. Good guy
3. Where Farsi is spoken
4. How some chili comes
5. Awry
6. Aladdin's transport
62. Japanese export
63. Bibliophile's treasure
65. Ticked off
66. Roman date
67. Tempt
68. What sorority sisters used to be called
69. Imparted
70. Blissful spot

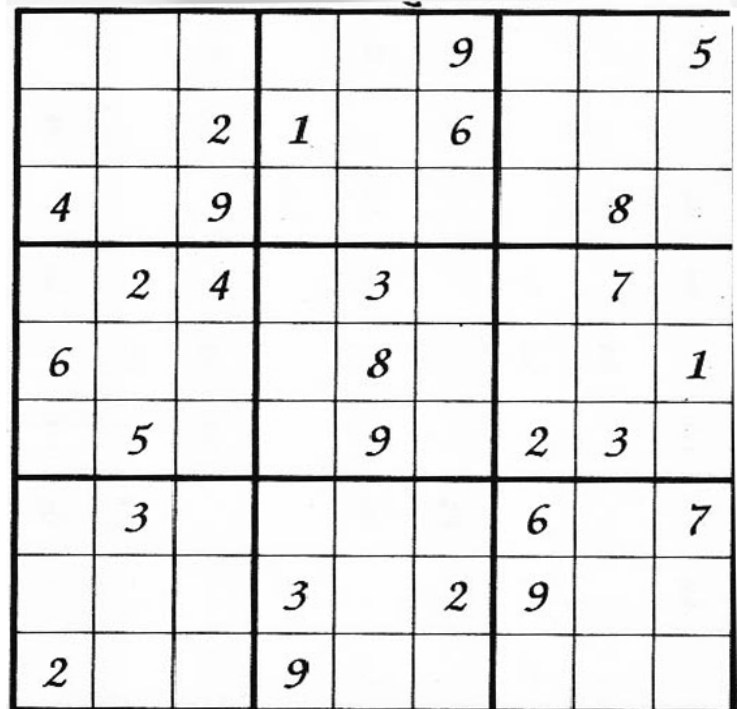
7. Slugger Carty
8. Panache
9. Flood
10. ____ del Rey, California
11. Take ____ view of
12. Trick
13. Light bulb inventor's monogram
21. Unnative
22. "____ Like It"
25. Prior, of old
26. Wences, for one
27. Clock sounds
29. Round
30. Zero
32. Hokey holder?
33. Love to death
34. Hamlet's subjects
37. UPS user

40. Gloria, in "Sunset Boulevard"
41. Rwanda animal
42. Suitable for posting
47. Changed course, at sea
49. Pad
52. Hollow stalks
54. Perch
55. Stew
56. Cairo's river
57. Spad or brad
58. City slicker
59. Thundering
60. Folk myth
61. Bow shape
64. Compre-hension



SINGLE TIME

Sudoku



SOLUTION

4	5	8	7	6	9	1	2	3
8	1	6	2	9	5	4	7	3
2	7	9	4	1	5	8	3	6
9	3	2	1	6	4	7	5	8
1	4	5	7	8	2	3	6	9
6	7	8	5	3	9	4	2	1
7	8	1	5	2	6	9	4	3
5	6	7	9	4	1	2	8	3
3	9	4	6	7	8	1	5	2

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9



DRUG STORES OPEN AFTER HOURS

JAN 12 - JAN 19

O'stad : ' ODUBER. ' - S.N. ' SAN NUCOLAAS'

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Posada Clinic Aruba
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INFORMATION

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Fellowship Clinic S.N.

Free treatment of
Alcoholism
and Drug Addiction
Anonymity guaranteed
Tel. 584-5440

SOS TELEAYUDO SOS

Telephone Helpline
583-1190
Mon.-Thu. 9 p.m.-12 midn.
Fri.-Sun. 9 p.m.-2 a.m.

CAS MARIE

Alzheimer's Day
Care Center
Tel: 5696910Important
Telephone
Numbers

HOSPITAL

Horacio Oduber Hospital
Tel. 587-4300

EMERGENCY

Telephone 911
POLICE HDQS
Telephone 100

TAXI

C.V. TAS
587-1998, 587-5900
In Oranjestad:
Tel. 582-2116, 582-1604
582-5447
In San Nicolas
Tel. 584-5160, 584-6602
professional taxi services
Tel. 588-0035

Al Anon Meetings

Mondays 6-7pm
Sabana Liber 8 in Noord
Tel: 5673356 / 5838989

Daily Exchange Rates				
Current as 01/11/13	Currency Code	Buying rate banknotes	Buying Cheques	Selling Rate
U.S.A.	USD	1.77	1.78	1.80
Dutch Antilles	ANG	98.00	100.00	100.20
Canada	CAD	1.79	1.81	1.83
Britain	GBP	2.81	2.86	2.92
Switzerland	CHF	194.33	195.05	195.85
Netherlands	EUR	234.28	236.42	238.79
Sweden	SEK	26.43	27.15	27.95
Denmark	DKK	30.73	31.45	32.25
Norway	NOK	31.21	31.93	32.73
Japan	JPY	198.24	200.05	202.06
(per 10,000)				
All rates for amounts up to AWG 100.00 per item.				

Finance

FAA sets safety review of Boeing 787 Dreamliner

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US regulators announced yesterday an in-depth safety review of Boeing's 787 Dreamliner after a recent spate of incidents involving the new high-tech aircraft.

The Federal Aviation Administration said it was working with Boeing to fully review the critical systems of the 787, which entered service in October 2011 after earning FAA accreditation.

An unusually high number of safety incidents this week is the latest problem to dog Boeing's newest airplane, after production glitches delayed delivery of the first plane to All Nippon Airways by three years.

ANA and Japan Airlines have reported five problems with the Dreamliner since Monday, including a fire in an unoccupied stationary aircraft, a fuel leak from one taxiing in Boston, and a cracked cockpit windshield that grounded one flight in Japan.

"There are concerns about recent events involving the Boeing 787. That's why today we are announcing that we are conducting a comprehensive review of the design and production of the 787," US Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood told a news conference.

Considered a milestone in aviation industry with its use of composite materials and electronics instead of aluminum and hydraulics, 50 of the US aerospace giant's 787s are in service worldwide.

But questions about its safety, and now a government review, have the potential to impact Boeing sales. Boeing insisted its aircraft are safe.

FAA chief Michael Huerta said the review will cover the design, manufacture and assembly of the 787, with an emphasis on the aircraft's electrical systems, including batteries and power display panels.

Experts also will review the certification process and Boeing's implementation of the standards in the certification process, he said.

US trade deficit balloons in November

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The US trade deficit widened sharply in November and posting the highest level in seven months amid a jump in consumer-goods imports, according to Department of Commerce data released yesterday.

The US trade deficit expanded to \$48.7 billion, up from a revised \$42.1 billion in October. November US exports were \$1.7 billion more than October exports, while November imports were \$8.4 billion above the October level.

Summary of the monthly Bulletin of Aruba Central Bank shows: October 2012 net foreign assets decreased

ORANJESTAD -- The Centrale Bank van Aruba concludes in its Monthly Bulletin of October 2012 that broad money grew by Afl. 19.4 million to Afl. 3,283.7 million, resulting from a rise in net domestic assets of Afl. 122.6 million and an Afl. 103.2 million drop in net foreign assets (excluding revaluation differences of gold and foreign exchange holdings) bringing these assets to, respectively, Afl. 1,943.9 million and Afl. 1,339.9 million.

The rise in the domestic component of the money supply was associated with increases in domestic credit and non-credit related balance sheet items of, respectively, Afl. 77.2 million and Afl. 45.5 million. The latter was due to clearing transactions. Domestic credit grew largely as a result of a Afl. 67.6 million decrease in the net claim of the public sector on the banking sector, attributed mainly to an Afl. 92.5 million drop in government's deposits and an Afl. 16.7 million rise in development funds. Claims on the private sector also went up namely by Afl. 9.6 million (+0.4 percent), associated with

an increase of Afl. 13.5 million in commercial loans and decreases in consumer credit and housing mortgages of, respectively, Afl. 2.9 million and Afl. 1.0 million.

The consumer price index (CPI) for October 2012 registered a 1.6 percent decrease, compared to the same month of 2011. The main contributors to this drop were housing, clothing & footwear, and household operation. Excluding the effect of food and energy (which partly affects the housing and transport components), the core CPI showed a 0.3 percent decrease compared to October 2011, brought about by declines in the index categories of clothing, household operation, and recreation and culture. The 12-month average inflation rate reached 2.2 percent in October 2012, down from 2.9 percent in September 2012.

In October 2012, the number of stay-over visitors totaled 65,684, which is just one percent (+672 visitors) higher than in October 2011. This growth was caused mainly by increases in the number of visitors from Latin America and Canada of, respectively, 11.5 percent (+1,647 visitors) and 43.5 percent (+816 visitors). The Latin American market

continued to expand, attributed mostly to increases in visitors from Venezuela of 20.3 percent (+1,680 visitors) and Colombia of 26.0 percent (+364 visitors). Conversely, arrivals from the U.S.A. and Europe declined, respectively, by 4.3 percent (-1,672 visitors) and 4.9 percent (-358 visitors).

The number of cruise visitors went down by 4,170 or 13.6 percent to 26,405 in the month of October 2012 compared to the same month of the previous year. The number of ship calls declined slightly from 20 to 18 in October 2012 compared to the corresponding month a year earlier.

In October 2012, registered tax revenue totaled Afl. 81.3 million, an increase of Afl. 8.8 million or 12.1 percent, compared to the same month of the previous year. This growth was associated mostly with surges in revenue from profit, income, and transfer tax of, respectively, Afl. 5.1 million, Afl. 3.1 million, and Afl. 1.1 million. Income from foreign exchange tax noted a slight decrease of Afl. 0.3 million, while that of turnover tax (BBO) went up by Afl. 0.4 million. Non-tax revenue recorded a fall of Afl. 5.9 million in October 2012 compared to the same month of last year.

Commodity markets win support from China data

LONDON (AFP) - Commodity markets were buoyed this week by upbeat Chinese economic data and the weak dollar, but trimmed gains heading into the weekend as many traders took the opportunity to cash in their gains.

Sentiment was boosted by news of a surge in China's trade surplus, which sparked hopes that the world's second-largest economy and biggest energy user was emerging from its slumber.

Official data showed Thursday that the Chinese trade surplus soared 48.1 percent to \$231.1 billion (176.4 billion euros) in 2012, though total trade volume grew at a much slower pace in the face of economic weakness at home and abroad.

The country's exports rose 7.9 percent to \$2.05 trillion from the year before, while imports increased 4.3 percent to \$1.82 trillion, the national customs bureau said.

Wal-Mart CEO knew of bribery in Mexico since 2005, emails show



Wal-Mart is facing fresh scrutiny over corruption allegations in Mexico after US lawmakers released confidential company documents that they said contradicted the retailer's public statements. New emails released by U.S. lawmakers show that Wal-Mart CEO Mike Duke learned in 2005 that executives in the company's México unit handed out bribes to local officials -- contradicting earlier statements that the company knew nothing about it. Allegations first surfaced in April that Wal-Mart failed to notify law enforcement that company officials authorized millions of dollars in bribes in Mexico to speed up getting building permits and gain other favors. Wal-Mart has been working with government officials in the U.S. and Mexico on that investigation.

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer

L	A	B	E	L	S	A	I	L	D	I	E	D
O	H	A	R	A	A	I	D	A	A	B	L	E
B	A	R	R	A	A	L	L	E	N	V	I	L
E	B	B	M	E	T	A	D	V	I	S	E	R
P	A	R	P	L	A	I	D					
S	E	R	E	N	A	D	E	U	N	B	A	R
P	L	A	T	T	O	R	S	S	A	B	O	T
L	O	G	E	E	L	M	E	R	N	O	N	E
A	P	O	R	T	T	U	T	U	N	U	D	E
T	E	N	P	I	N	T	A	B	L	E	T	O
A	N	I	S	E	B	E	R					
M	A	C	R	A	M	E	A	L	E	M	O	T
A	M	O	K	B	R	U	C	E	W	A	Y	N
T	I	L	E	L	I	L	T	A	B	N	E	R
H	E	A	R	E	F	T	S	Y	E	A	R	N

AIG Aruba with another marvelous calendar with Birds of Aruba



First copy of calendar to Min Mr. Dowers



Mukesh, Raja & family



Roly, Alice & VNO Ccuple



"AIG Aruba has issued its 12th annual calendar with Birds of Aruba for the year 2013. What makes this milestone so very special is that this year's calendar is the 5th edition that the Company has produced in collaboration with Aruba Birdlife Conservation.

The company would like to thank all those involved in the production of this extraordinary calendar which support the Wildlife and Environment of Aruba.

The Company kindly asks the general public to support this cause by purchasing a calendar from Aruba Birdlife Foundation. AIG Customers can obtain their free copy from the office as of next week.

Pictures show the ambience during of launch of the calendar."



Niti and friends



Chobby Croes, Jossy Lacle & wives

Excellent dining, charming ambiance and a breathtaking view found only at La Trattoria El Faro Blanco



Stunning sunset

Over twenty years ago, a very clever person had the idea of placing a cozy little restaurant on the top of the cliff adjacent to the California Lighthouse, offering the most stunning view of Aruba imaginable. La Trattoria el Faro Blanco took over the location some years ago, and the restaurant's quaint trappings, superb selection and amenable staff has made it a

one of the island's most popular dining spots ever since.

Savoring the sight of a spectacular Aruban sunset and the tiered layout of the eatery also makes it the ideal spot for marking a special occasion, such as an anniversary or a marriage proposal, as well as a perfect venue for weddings or a celebratory party. An extensive and di-

verse menu and wine list allows those planning a special festivity will be able to devise a memorable event and management is ready and willing to help you stay within your budget.

Many have taken note of this singular location as the place to go for that memorable romantic meal, and their reservation staff reports a waiting list for the rail tables that offer the best unobstructed view,



Osso Buco with Risotto



recommending reservations well in advance if this is important to you.

The restaurant is now open from early in the day for refreshments, and is the perfect lunch stop while touring, serving from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM, after which visitors can enjoy a light snack from their Pizza Mini Menu until 6:00 PM when they officially open for dinner, until 11:00 PM.

All these aspects of charming surroundings,

dining al fresco with a breathtaking view (or in their enclosed air-conditioned dining room, if you prefer) and fine food makes La Trattoria El Faro the single dining experience that must not be missed before departing Aruba. Reservations can be made by calling 586- 0786 or 586-0787, or via e-mail link at their website, www.aruba-latrattoria.com, where you can peruse their latest menu, as Chef Alberto is always devising some tasty new specialty to take advantage of what is fresh for the season.

O Condominiums

A small, exclusive boutique condo resort tailored to your taste



Aruba's most successful developers of secure, superior communities for both the permanent and part time resident market, will soon break ground on what they consider their most exclusive project to date. Known for 16 years of unmatched quality and service, the Cas Bon people are proud to unveil their new pet project: O Condominiums. This is the same company which developed the innovative Gold Coast Villas community in Malmok.

Renowned for reliable construction, developers of O Condominiums consider the boutique community will be the "jewel in the crown" of the nine projects they have successfully completed and maintain. It is only three stories and twenty luxurious units, of which 14 will be oceanfront, the remainder, ocean view. Sizes range from one bedroom condominiums

with a bath and a half to three-bedrooms, each bedroom with its own bath, and an additional guest half/bath. The designs include a family entertainment room that will be specially fitted with electronic and Internet connections and outlets enabling a state-of-the-art home theater. An important aspect of this singular facility is owners have various options to customize kitchens and fixtures to their particular tastes and standards.

Each apartment sports an extremely spacious 35 square meter covered terrace overlooking the sea. Windows will be double-paned and doors have weather stripping to insure less cost on air-conditioning, which is integrated into construction. Homeowners will have input into the finishing they prefer in the kitchen and other rooms, to customize your condominium to your taste. Public amenities will include

an elegant pool deck, concierge services, lounge area, BBQ station, fitness room, assigned parking, additional outside storage for bicycles and personal items, and 24-hour security. A quiet, secluded section of Eagle beach is only a few steps from the front door.

O Condominiums officially opened the doors of their sales office onsite at Eagle Beach on December 24. Interested parties can inspect the project in a spacious plot right next to the gourmet Screaming Eagle restaurant. The project is directed towards discerning clients seeking a top quality property on Aruba in an ideal, tranquil, beachfront location. Prospective property owners will find the Cas Bon people enjoy an exceptional reputation on Aruba for excellence and reliability. Contact the sales office at 732-0000 or visit their website: <http://www.o-eagle-beacharuba.com>

WASHINGTON, DC (AFP) - Commemorative glass tumblers and stemware is for sale at the Presidential Inaugural Committee's store near the intersection of 11th and F Streets NW January 11, 2013 in Washington, DC. A variety of merchandise, from buttons and water bottles to handbags and limited edition coin sets, will be for sale until the January 21 inauguration of President Barack Obama.



Eat like a local at The Queen's restaurant at Palm Beach Plaza



Varella, Luisa and the next generation of chef



Keshi Yena with plaintains, vegetables and pica

An elegant décor with a breezy terrace overlooking Palm Beach welcomes guests to Varella Innocencia's very popular restaurant showcasing authentic local cuisine:

The Queen's.

They may have moved from Oranjestad to hipper new digs in Palm Beach Plaza, but the food and prices are strictly native, which is what first won this charming eatery their loyal clientele. Varella's mom, Luisa, is still in the kitchen, conjuring up the delicious dishes that have been in her family for generations, acknowledged on the menu with items such as "Carni Stoba di Mamachi" - "Grandma's Beef Stew," and their Arawak Steak, along with local delicacies like Keshi Yena - "Full Cheese." This is a tasty, filling stew of chicken, with other ingredients that are handy that day, all incased in a thick skin of melted Gouda. It was very satisfying and particularly memorable paired with The Queen's garlic bread and very special Pica, a mix of chopped onions and the famous local hot pepper, Madame Janette. Not overly spicy, it lends that perfect bit of tang to this deliciously picturesque meal.

One of the distinctions of Aruban cuisine is incorporating unique indigenous ingredients such as in Wild Cucumber Stew and a particular light fish chowder accompanied by the local specialties pan bati (corn meal pancake) and funchi (the local version of polenta.)

Seafood main courses range from Catch of the Day Aruban Style to shrimp and a mixed seafood platter with shrimp, fish, squid, scallops and mussels. Meat dishes such as BBQ Chicken and Ribs or Grilled Tenderloin each including a choice of 2 side dishes; all quite yummy and bargain-priced to boot!

The Queen's is located on the second level of Palm Beach Plaza, tucked into a cozy corner at the front of the mall. If you have a mind to try the real deal in Aruban food, without a doubt, this is the way to truly eat like a local. **They are open from 11:00 AM to 11:00 PM, daily**, offering indoor and outdoor dining. Aside from an extensive menu they also have daily specials made from whatever is in season and Mama Luisa is in the mood to prepare, so don't forget to ask about what isn't on the menu!

Sport

Golf: Oosthuizen birdies final hole to snatch lead



DURBAN, South Africa, (AFP) - South African Louis Oosthuizen birdied the final hole to take a one-shot lead after two rounds of the Volvo Golf Champions tournament at Durban Country Club Friday.

The former British Open champion birdied eight holes -- five on the front nine and three on the journey back -- and did not drop a shot for a 64 and a halfway 132 total.

Oosthuizen is one stroke ahead of Scott Jamieson and first round leader Thongchai Jaidee. The Scot also returned a 64 over the 6,111-metre course while the Thai had a 68, three shots more than he took Thursday.

There is a six-shot gap between the leader and those tied for fourth place on 139 - Dane Thomas Bjorn, Julien Quesne of France, Scot Paul Lawrie, Danny Willett of England, Indian Jeev Milkha Singh and Shane Lowry of Ireland.

Reigning British Open

champion Ernie Els of South Africa, Belgian Nicolas Colsaerts and Francesco Molinari of Italy are a stroke further back in the 33-man field.

Defending champion Branden Grace of South Africa, winner of five European Tour events last season, atoned for a disappointing opening 75 with a 67 that placed him on 142, nine strokes behind the leader.

Oosthuizen finished the outward nine strongly with three consecutive birdies and had two more on 17 and 18 in a round notable for good recovery shots from the rough after only seven of his 14 tee shots found the fairways.

Jamieson seems to enjoy the Indian Ocean city as he won the Nelson Mandela Championship -- shortened to two rounds by torrential rain -- at another Durban course last month..

Birdies at two, three and four got his round off to a flying start and two more enabled the Scot to turn in 31 before the only slip, a bogey five at 10, was followed by another four birdies.

An eagle three at the eighth was the highlight for ex-paratrooper Thongchai, who also had three birdies and a bogey as he pursues a sixth European Tour title.

Former victorious Ryder Cup captain Colin Montgomerie of Scotland had a round to forget with his 78 including six bogeys and one double bogey and he lies second last, two shots ahead of Portuguese Ricardo Santos.

The Volvo Golf Champions is restricted to 2012 European Tour winners and those with more than 10 career titles on the circuit, and there is no halfway cut because of the small field.

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Rallying: Peterhansel stage win continued from page 16

On Friday, Peterhansel finished the 218km run with a 39sec lead over compatriot

Guerlain Chicherit, in an SMG, with American NASCAR driver Robby Gor-

don, in a Hummer, 1min 08sec off the pace.

Al-Attiyah, who had won his third stage of this year's race on Thursday to slash Peterhansel's overall lead down to 1min 18sec, was sixth on Friday in his Buggy, 1min 56sec behind.

He remains second overall, but it is now 3min 14sec behind defending champion Peterhansel.

In the motorcycling stage, America's Kurt Caselli, on a KTM, took the honours, winning in 1hr 51min 31sec, an advantage of 1min 23sec over Chile's Francisco Lopez and Olivier Pain of France.

Pain still leads the overall standings by 6min 06sec ahead of Lopez.

Defending champion Cyril Despres, who had been second overall, dropped to more than 14 minutes off the pace after mechanical problems left him without fifth gear for half the distance.

"Cyril's problems have given me a significant gap for the lead, and that's a good thing for me," said Pain.

"That's just part of racing, but I'm not forgetting that it could happen to me too, so I'm not getting cocky about it, especially since Cyril has the capacity to claw back the time he's lost."

Saturday's eighth stage is a 247km timed run between Salta and Tucuman.

Cycling: Movistar eye Grand Tour glory in 2013



MADRID (AFP) - Spanish team Movistar set their sights on Grand Tour glory in 2013 under the leadership of resurgent climber Alejandro Valverde as they unveiled their new team line-up Friday.

"With a leader like Alejandro we can only think about podium finishes in the Grand Tours and that is what we are betting on," said the team's manager Eusebio Unzué.

Valverde, who won the Tour of Spain in 2009 and came second in 2012 after returning from a two-year ban for doping, said the team would go all out in the Tour de France, in which he won the last mountain stage in 2012.

"We are going to give everything in that" in 2013, he said at Friday's presentation. "Then there is the Vuelta and the World Championship, which is very hard, but we will

see whether any of these aims turns out well and we can achieve something."

To help Valverde and fellow team stalwarts such as Pablo Lastras, Juan Jose Cobo and Jose Joaquin Rojas do so, the team presented five new riders including Eros Capecchi, a 26-year-old Italian who has ridden five times in the Giro d'Italia.

Other stars retained in the team are Andrey Amador, 26, who won a stage in the Giro last year and Portuguese rider Rui Costa who finished 18th overall in the Tour de France - ahead of Valverde in 20th.

Polish mountain veteran Sylvester Szmyd, 34, joined from team Italian Liquigas and Argiro Ospina, 21, from Colombia, joined his countryman Nairo Quintana, Movistar's surprise discovery last year.

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NFL: Ravens relish another shot at Manning, Broncos - Preview

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Peyton Manning's comeback trail meets Ray Lewis's farewell tour on Saturday when Manning's Denver Broncos host the Baltimore Ravens in the second round of the NFL playoffs.

Manning, a four-time NFL Most Valuable Player who missed all of the 2011 season after multiple neck surgeries, rewarded the faith of his new team in Denver with a stellar campaign that included 4,659 passing yards and 37 touchdown passes.

With the 36-year-old veteran quarterback at the helm the Broncos won their last 11 regular-season games to grab



Ray Lewis of the Baltimore Ravens and Peyton Manning of Denver Broncos

the top seed and home field advantage in the American Conference.

After enjoying a bye they'll try to fend off a Ravens side energized in the first round by the return from injury of defensive star Lewis, who says this playoff push will be his last before he departs the NFL whenever Baltimore's season ends.

The Ravens booked their second-round ticket with a 24-9 victory over Indianapolis last weekend.

Quarterback Joe Flacco threw for 282 yards and two touchdowns in that contest, but it was the return of 17-year veteran Lewis, for his first game since he suffered a torn triceps in mid-October, that added a real spark for the Ravens, especially after his announcement days before the game that this would be his last NFL season.

The Broncos beat the Ravens 34-17 in a regular-season contest in December, and Ravens wide receiver Anquan Boldin said the team are keen to avenge that defeat and

move a step closer to a Super Bowl berth.

Sunday's AFC game pits Houston against the Patriots at New England, while in the National Conference San Francisco host Green Bay on Saturday and the top-seeded Atlanta Falcons host Seattle on Sunday.

The Patriots, led by superstar quarterback Tom Brady, will be well-rested after a first-round bye and seeking to repeat their 42-14 rout of the Texans late in the regular season.

That defeat was part of a late-campaign collapse by Houston that saw the Texans drop out of first place in the conference. They beat Cincinnati in the first round last weekend to advance.

The Falcons earned their first-round bye thanks to some spectacular play from quarterback Matt Ryan, who threw for a team-record 4,719 yards and 32 touchdowns in the regular season.

But Ryan is 0-3 in previous playoff starts over the past four years, a run of futility he

insists he has every chance of halting.

"I'm confident in the guys around us," Ryan said. "We've proven we can go out there and be successful. You have to buy into that. You have to believe that."

The Seahawks rallied from a 14-0 deficit to beat the Washington Redskins in the first round.

The victory was a confidence-builder for rookie quarterback Russell Wilson, but also saw Seattle lose defensive standout Chris Clemons to a torn knee ligament.

In San Francisco, the 49ers will be seeking a second straight NFC Championship Game berth when they host the Packers.

San Francisco opened this season with a week-one victory over the Pack at Lambeau Field that ended Green Bay's 13-game regular-season home winning streak.

Since then, Colin Kaepernick has taken over from Alex Smith as San Francisco's starting quarterback.

Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers said both teams have evolved since their season-opener.

"We're a different football team," said Rodgers, who led the Packers to a 24-10 first-round victory over Minnesota.



ZAKOPANE (AFP)-: Thomas Morgenstern of Austria jumps during the 15th World Cup Ski Jumping team competition, in Zakopane, Poland, on January 11, 2013. Slovenia won the first place, Poland the second and Austria the third.

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NBA: George lifts Pacers over Knicks



INDIANAPOLIS (AFP) - The Indiana Pacers won the battle of the first-placed teams Thursday, beating the New York Knicks 81-76 behind a superb defence and 24 points and 11 rebounds from forward Paul George.

George also had six steals and five assists for the Pac-

ers, who won their third consecutive National Basketball Association game.

"We are improving every game," George said. "Our defence is holding up. We may not score a lot of points but our offence is going to come around. Right now we are just grinding it out."

While George did a little bit of everything, Ian Mahinmi came off the bench to help out with the scoring. Centre Mahinmi finished with 13 points as he became the only other Pacer player to reach double figures.

"In the first half I struggled so I knew I had to get going,"

George said. "I really tried to defend and was able to get some easy baskets."

The Central Division leading Pacers limited the Knicks to 26 points below their average two days after holding the reigning NBA-champion Miami Heat to 77 points. The Pacers improved to 22-14 while the Knicks fell to 23-12.

The Knicks were without Carmelo Anthony, serving a one-game ban for trying to confront Boston's Kevin Garnett following Monday's loss against the Celtics.

Without the league's second leading scorer, New York shot 35 percent from the field to drop back-to-back games for the third time this season.

J.R. Smith scored a game-

high 25 points and Tyson Chandler added 12 points and 15 rebounds for the Knicks, who are first in the Atlantic Division.

Anthony was suspended for trying to confront Garnett in the arena tunnel, near the players' locker rooms, and in the parking garage.

Anthony and Garnett battled all game long on Monday and things almost escalated following the game as Anthony dressed quickly then tried unsuccessfully to locate Garnett.

The Knicks won this season's first meeting between the two teams, an 88-76 win on November 18 at Madison Square Garden. New York has lost four of its last six in Indianapolis.

Rallying: Peterhansel stage win overshadowed by third death



Thomas Bourgin

ALTA, Argentina (AFP) - Ten-time champion Stephane Peterhansel extended his Dakar Rally lead on Friday, but the world's most gruelling endurance event was once again hit by tragedy when a French motorcyclist was killed.

As Peterhansel claimed the seventh stage which crossed the Andes between Calama in Chile and Salta in Argentina to build a lead of more than

three minutes over 2011 champion Nasser al-Attiyah, the event was reeling from a third death in two days.

Competitor Thomas Bourgin, 25, was involved in a collision with a police car which was coming in the opposite direction on the link road to the start of Friday's stage in Calama.

"The rally's medical teams deployed on the ground were only able to certify the rider's death, probably instant," a statement on the race's official website reported.

Bourgin was in 68th place in the overall motorcycling rankings of his first Dakar.

On Thursday, two people were killed in a head-on collision between a rally support vehicle and a taxi near Peru's border with Chile.

Going into the 2013 event, some 59 people, including 20 spectators, had lost their lives in the race.

continues on page 14

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